

Community resources

[Follow us on Twitter](#) [Check our Reddit](#) [Twitter this](#) [Digg this page](#) [Contact us on IRC](#)

courage is contagious

Viewing cable 06BEIRUT2470, TFLE01: UN PRSG: "DON'T RUSH" ON INTERNATIONAL

If you are new to these pages, please read an introduction on the [structure of a cable](#) as well as how to [discuss them](#) with others. See also the [FAQs](#)

Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#06BEIRUT2470**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
06BEIRUT2470	2006-07-25 16:20	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN	Embassy Beirut

Appears in these articles:

[not](#)
[yet](#)
[set](#)

VZCZCXRO0775
PP RUEHAG RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK
DE RUEHLB #2470/01 2061620
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 251620Z JUL 06
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4785
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN 0659
RHMFISS/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIRUT 002470

SIPDIS

NOFORN
SIPDIS

NSC FOR ABRAMS/DORAN/SINGH/HARDING
LONDON FOR TSOU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/24/2016

TAGS: [PINS](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [EAID](#) [LE](#)

SUBJECT: TFLE01: UN PRSG: "DON'T RUSH" ON INTERNATIONAL
STABILIZATION FORCE

BEIRUT 00002470 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Ambassador Jeffrey D. Feltman for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)
) .

SUMMARY

11. (C/NF) In a 7/25 conversation, Geir Pedersen, Personal Representative of the UN Secretary-General (PRSG), emphasized the importance of showing Lebanon's Shia community that a domestic political approach to Hizballah's disarmament remained possible. He recommended that an international stabilization force -- a successor to UNIFIL in southern Lebanon -- be "sold" as a means of guaranteeing respect for the Blue Line, from Lebanon's perspective as well as Israel's. He cautioned against moving so fast on an international stabilization force as to derail potential political means of disarming Hizballah. End summary.

EMPHASIZE TAIF, AVOID RADICALIZING THE SHIAS

12. (C/NF) In a July 25 discussion with the Ambassador and emboff on the necessary elements for a sustainable end to ongoing Hizballah-Israeli hostilities, Pedersen agreed that an emphasis on the 1989 Taif Agreement would be helpful regarding Hizballah's obligation to disarm. Keeping the focus on Taif -- the agreement that laid the framework for post-civil-war governance in Lebanon, and which also called for the disarmament of all militias -- would convey the point that a domestic political process should be the primary means of disarming Hizballah, Pedersen said.

13. (C/NF) Pedersen suggested that the Shia community would feel less threatened by an emphasis on disarming Hizballah by political means. What the Lebanese government needed to do, in his view, was to avoid any steps that radicalized the Shia community further. The idea to be conveyed to the Shias was that, regardless of whatever had happened in the past, a political solution was possible. There was potentially a role here for Michel Aoun, Pedersen said.

"SELLING" A NEW INTERNATIONAL FORCE

14. (C/NF) Pedersen agreed that, with regard to the establishment of an international stabilization force in southern Lebanon, determining the force's mandate and rules of engagement was the primary challenge. While the mandate had to include disarmament of Hizballah, it would be important to "sell" the force not as a shield for Israeli interests, but as a guarantor of respect for the Blue Line in both directions, Lebanese and Israeli.

15. (C/NF) The Lebanese public should see the international stabilization force as a barrier to Israeli overflights across Lebanon as well as Hizballah rocket attacks on Israel, Pedersen said. He agreed that an emphasis by the force on civil affairs functions in southern Lebanon would be helpful in gaining support.

"UNIFIL IS HISTORY"

16. (C/NF) According to Pedersen, the UN Secretary-General is "convinced" that the current UN peacekeeping presence in southern Lebanon, UNIFIL, has to change. "UNIFIL is history," Pedersen said, describing the Secretary-General's view. The history of the Multi-National Force (MNF) of the early 1980s, which was forced to disband and withdraw following a series of terrorist attacks carried out by Hizballah was a cause of concern, however.

¶7. (C/NF) Given the fate of the MNF two decades ago, Pedersen asked, what countries would be willing to enter in UNIFIL's place with a more expansive mandate that included disarmament of Hizballah? Were a cease-fire part of the "package" that established the international stabilization force, would Hizballah still attack it? It was "hard to tell," Pedersen said.

SINIORA NEEDS TO ASK FIRST

¶8. (C/NF) Pedersen agreed that it would be a good idea for

BEIRUT 00002470 002.2 OF 002

Prime Minister Siniora to call for the deployment of an international stabilization force. Siniora should coordinate with Speaker of Parliament Berri -- the most prominent non-Hizballah Shia politician in the country -- in doing so, however. For Siniora to get into too many specifics in his request -- such as the use of a NATO rapid-deployment force to fill in the gap until a UN peacekeeping force could be stood up, for example -- might only "complicate things," he said.

¶9. (C/NF) A UN mandate was key to any replacement of UNIFIL, said Pedersen, who appeared skeptical of any non-UN approach, such as using a NATO force in the interim. Needed was a "strong" UN Security Council resolution, one that included some "clever wording" on the mandate of such a force. (As the Ambassador and emboff departed, however, Pedersen's senior political advisor, Salman Shaikh, whispered that a UN force in fact might not be the right way to go -- such an approach threatened to "over-bureaucratize" the mission, he warned.)

THE TIME FACTOR

¶10. (C/NF) Leaving aside the question of what to do in the interim, Petersen said it would not be a problem for the UN to generate a replacement for UNIFIL in approximately 90 days. He doubted that Israel would be happy with anything sooner, nor would a number of Lebanese political figures that had pinned their hopes on the Israeli military campaign decisively weakening Hizballah. Neither side was in a hurry, Petersen suggested, because the Israeli ground offensive against Hizballah appeared to be progressing very slowly.

¶11. (C/NF) Twelve days after Israeli operations began following the abduction of two Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers, Pedersen explained, the IDF has captured only one village, Maroun al-Ras. (He understood reports of the IDF's capture of nearby Bint Jbeil to be unconfirmed.) There were a total of 19 villages along the Blue Line, many if not all of which the IDF presumably needed to capture in order to drive Hizballah out. (He noted that not all of those villages have Shia populations.)

¶12. (C/NF) While the quickness with which an international stabilization force could be deployed was important, Pedersen said, that quickness should not be at the expense of the political process in Lebanon. Intent on standing such a force up, the international community should avoid doing anything that made a political process towards Hizballah disarmament more difficult. "Don't rush," Pedersen said.

COMMENT

¶13. (C/NF) Regarding Pedersen's comment about Michel Aoun, it is true that Aoun has positioned himself as a Christian figure with cross-confessional appeal, one who could bring Hizballah into a genuinely Lebanese fold by offering assurances of respect for Shia community interests. That, after all, is how Aoun and his more ardent supporters justified his February 2006 memorandum of understanding with Hizballah's Secretary-General, Hassan Nasrallah. The current

crisis has given the lie to Aoun's strategy, however. For now, treating Aoun as the key to a solution would simply inflate Aoun, not deflate Hizballah.

FELTMAN